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SEP 18 2009

In re Application of :
Laghi :
Application No. 10/711,077 :
Filed: 20 August, 2004 :
Attorney Docket No. A34800-114077-59 :

**OFFICE OF PETITIONS
DECISION**

This is a decision on the petition filed on 15 June, 2009, for revival of an application abandoned due to unintentional delay under 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b).

The petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) is **DISMISSED**.

Any further petition to revive must be submitted within TWO (2) MONTHS from the mail date of this decision. Extensions of time under 37 C.F.R. §1.136(a) are permitted. The reconsideration request should include a cover letter entitled "Renewed Petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b)."

This is **not** a final agency action within the meaning of 5 U.S.C. §704.

As to the Allegations
of Unintentional Delay

The requirements of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) are the petition and fee therefor, a reply, a proper statement of unintentional delay under the regulation, and, where applicable, a terminal disclaimer and fee. (However, it does not appear that a terminal disclaimer and fee are due here.)

Petitioner does not appear to have addressed satisfactorily the statement/showing-of-delay requirement under the rule. This deficiency must be overcome.

Petitioners' attentions always are directed to the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c)(II).

BACKGROUND

The record reflects as follows:

Petitioner failed to reply timely and properly to the non-final Office action mailed on 1 November, 2007, with reply due under absent an extension of time on or before 1 February, 2008.

The application went abandoned by operation of law after midnight 1 February, 2008.

The Office mailed the Notice of Abandonment 12 May, 2008.

On 15 June, 2009, Petitioner filed, *inter alia*, a petition (with fee) pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b), with a reply in the form of an amendment and made the statement of unintentional delay.

(The request and fee for extension of time filed after expiration of the statutory period of reply are not proper. The fee will be refunded. Should Petitioner later find that the fee has not been refunded, Petitioner should file a request with the Office of Finance and submit with it a copy of this decision.)

*It is not apparent whether the person signing the statement of unintentional delay was in a position to have firsthand or direct knowledge of the facts and circumstances of the delay at issue.¹ In the event that such an inquiry has not been made, Petitioner **must** make such an inquiry.*

*If such inquiry results in the discovery that it is not correct that the entire delay in filing the required reply from the due date for the reply until the filing of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) was unintentional, Petitioner **must** notify the Office.*

Petitioner provided no explanation for the extended period of abandonment—sixteen (16) months since abandonment and thirteen (13) months since Notice thereof. On any renewed petition, Petitioner (Applicant) must provide an explanation of the delay, with documentation in support thereof.

Again, Petitioners' attentions always are directed to the guidance in the Commentary at MPEP §711.03(c) (II).

The availability of applications and application papers online to applicants/practitioners who diligently associate their Customer Number with the respective application(s) now provides an applicant/practitioner on-demand information as to events/transactions in an application.

¹ See 37 C.F.R. §10.18(b) and Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure; Final Rule Notice, 62 Fed. Reg. 53131, 53178 (October 10, 1997), 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office 63, 103 (October 21, 1997).

Out of an abundance of caution, Petitioners always are reminded that those registered to practice and all others who make representations before the Office **must** inquire into the underlying facts of representations made to the Office and support averments with the appropriate documentation—since all owe to the Office the continuing duty to disclose.²

STATUTES, REGULATIONS AND ANALYSIS

Congress has authorized the Commissioner to "revive an application if the delay is shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner to have been "unavoidable." 35 U.S.C. §133 (1994).³

The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.137(a) and (b) set forth the requirements for a Petitioner to revive a previously unavoidably or unintentionally, respectively, abandoned application under this congressional grant of authority.

Unintentional delays are those that do not satisfy the very strict statutory and regulatory requirements of unavoidable delay, and also, by definition, are not intentional.⁴))

As to Allegations of Unintentional Delay

As indicated above, the requirements of a grantable petition pursuant to 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) are the petition and fee therefor, a proper reply, a proper statement and/or showing of unintentional delay under the regulation, and, where applicable, a terminal disclaimer and fee.

As discussed above, it does not appear that Petitioner has satisfied the statement/showing-of-delay requirement under the rule.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, the petition under 37 C.F.R. §1.137(b) is **dismissed**.

Further correspondence with respect to this matter should be addressed as follows:

² See supplement of 17 June, 1999. The Patent and Trademark Office is relying on petitioner's duty of candor and good faith and accepting a statement made by Petitioner. See Changes to Patent Practice and Procedure, 62 Fed. Reg. at 53160 and 53178, 1203 Off. Gaz. Pat. Office at 88 and 103 (responses to comments 64 and 109)(applicant obligated under 37 C.F.R. §10.18 to inquire into the underlying facts and circumstances when providing statements to the Patent and Trademark Office).

³ 35 U.S.C. §133 provides:

35 U.S.C. §133 Time for prosecuting application.

Upon failure of the applicant to prosecute the application within six months after any action therein, of which notice has been given or mailed to the applicant, or within such shorter time, not less than thirty days, as fixed by the Commissioner in such action, the application shall be regarded as abandoned by the parties thereto, unless it be shown to the satisfaction of the Commissioner that such delay was unavoidable.

⁴ Therefore, by example, an unintentional delay in the reply might occur if the reply and transmittal form are to be prepared for shipment by the US Postal Service, but other pressing matters distract one's attention and the mail is not timely deposited for shipment.

By Mail: Mail Stop PETITION
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By hand: U. S. Patent and Trademark Office
Customer Service Window, Mail Stop Petitions
Randolph Building
401 Dulany Street
Alexandria, VA 22314

By facsimile: (571) 273-8300
Attn: Office of Petitions

Telephone inquiries regarding this decision may be directed to the undersigned at (571) 272-3214—it is noted, however, that all practice before the Office is in writing (see: 37 C.F.R. §1.2⁵) and the proper authority for action on any matter in this regard are the statutes (35 U.S.C.), regulations (37 C.F.R.) and the commentary on policy (MPEP). Therefore, no telephone discussion may be controlling or considered authority for Petitioner's action(s).



/John J. Gillon, Jr./
John J. Gillon, Jr.
Senior Attorney
Office of Petitions

⁵ The regulations at 37 C.F.R. §1.2 provide:

§1.2 Business to be transacted in writing.

All business with the Patent and Trademark Office should be transacted in writing. The personal attendance of Petitioners or their attorneys or agents at the Patent and Trademark Office is unnecessary. The action of the Patent and Trademark Office will be based exclusively on the written record in the Office. No attention will be paid to any alleged oral promise, stipulation, or understanding in relation to which there is disagreement or doubt.